



August 9, 2022

The Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Health
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

The Honourable Carolyn Bennett, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

Dear Ministers Duclos and Bennett:

On behalf of the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) – the national voice of psychology, I am writing to commend you for the recent announcement that Health Canada is allocating \$3.3 million in funding to the Canadian Association of MAiD Assessors and Practitioners to develop and implement a national, fully accredited MAiD curriculum that will provide high quality MAiD training to health care practitioners across Canada.

The CPA responded to the Final Report of the Expert Panel on MAiD and Mental Illness (Expert Panel) which we shared with you both in June 2022 (CPA response enclosed). As outlined in our response and amongst other recommendations, the CPA strongly recommends that psychologist regulatory bodies be included in the development of standards of practice for the assessment of mental capacity to grant MAiD requests. We also recommend that these standards apply equally to physicians, nurse practitioners and psychologists.

The Final Report identifies only psychiatrists as independent assessors for cases of MAiD MD-SUMC. The CPA strongly recommends that independent assessors for MAiD MD-SUMC include both psychiatrists **and psychologists**. Psychologists not only diagnose and treat mental disorders, but our unique expertise is also assessment of mental functioning. Further, including psychologists, who greatly outnumber psychiatrists, expands the pool of regulated health providers with the expertise to do this work.

Psychologists are the country's largest group of regulated mental health care providers who both diagnose and treat mental and cognitive problems and disorders. In addition, most unique among our scope of practice is the assessment, psychometric measurement and diagnosis of cognitive and emotional functioning and disorders. We believe fully that it is our responsibility to contribute our expertise to the development of sound and effective policy that will govern access to MAiD by people with mental disorders and guide the practice of regulated health providers involved in the MAiD process of whom psychologists are part.

The CPA remains available to you at any time to discuss this issue further. I can be reached at 1-888-472-0657 ext. 323, or executiveoffice@cpa.ca. With best wishes and appreciation to you both for your leadership on the important topic of MAiD.

Sincerely,

K.R. Cohen, Ph. D., C. Psych
Chief Executive Officer

Enclosure